

exercise such option and the qualifying length of service taking into account the said addition is not more than the service he would have rendered had he retired on the date of his superannuation.

There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to revise the existing Voluntary Retirement Scheme, as referred to above, in respect of Central Government employees in general. However, the Finance Minister in his Budget Speech on 28 February, 2001 had, *inter alia*, announced that:

"The Surplus Pool under the Department of Personnel will be streamlined and equipped to redeploy and retrain surplus staff. Employees in the Surplus Pool will also be offered an attractive VRS package."

Further action has been initiated in the context of this announcement of the Finance Minister.

Sponsoring of children of higher officers by MNCS

3740. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are aware that children of several high ranking officers of the Union Government and Public Sector Undertakings are studying abroad and are being sponsored by the Multinational Companies in order to find favours from these high ranking officers;
- (b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted by Government in this regard;
- (c) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING AND DEPARTMENT OF PENSIONS AND PENSIONERS WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (d) The information is not centrally available. It is, however, stated that as per the

provisions of the Conduct Rules, no class-I officer shall, except the previous sanction of the Government servant, permit his son, daughter or other dependent to accept employment in any company or firm with which he has official dealings or in any other company or firm having official dealings with the Government. A Government servant shall, as soon as he becomes aware of the acceptance by a member of his family, of an employment in any company or firm, intimate such acceptance to the prescribed authority and shall also intimate whether he has or has had any official dealings with that company or firm. The Rules also provide that no Government servant shall in discharge of his official duties deal with any matter or give or sanction any contract to any company or firm or any other person if he or any member of his family is employed in that company or firm or under the person.

The Conduct Rules also provide that save as provided in these rules, no Government servant shall accept, or permit any member of his family or any other person acting on his behalf to accept any gift. The expression 'gift' shall include free transport, boarding, lodging or other services or any other pecuniary advantage provided by any person other than a near relative or personal friend having no official dealings with the Government servant.

Thus, there are adequate provisions in the rules to check whether employment/study abroad, if any, of children of officers is sponsored by Multinational Companies with an intention to find favours from the officers concerned.

PMO's interference in various issues

3741. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem published in the 'Times of India'* dated 16th February, 2001, under the caption, "PMO is trying to extend its reach, Former Secretary";

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;